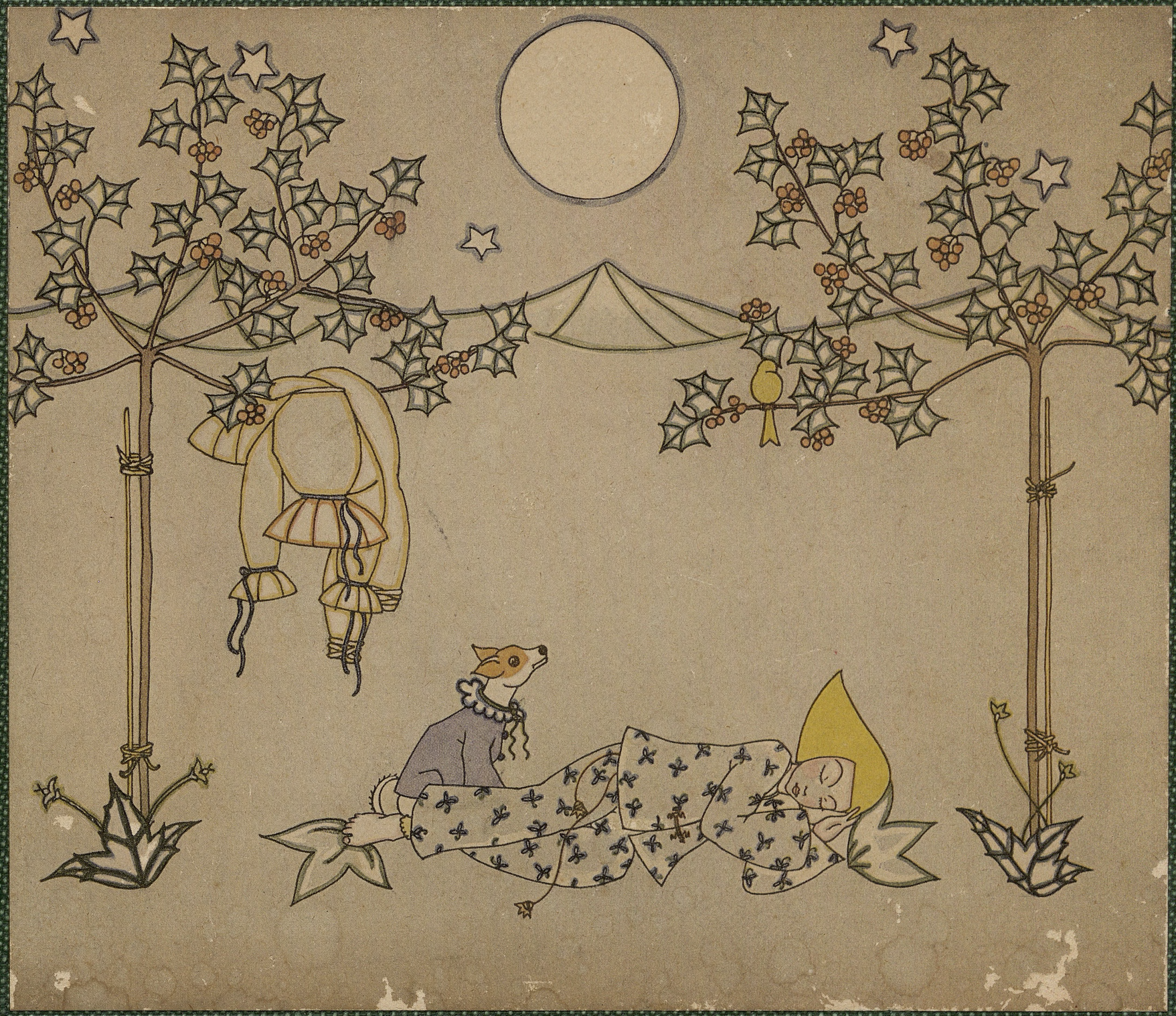
DAVID *the* DREAMER



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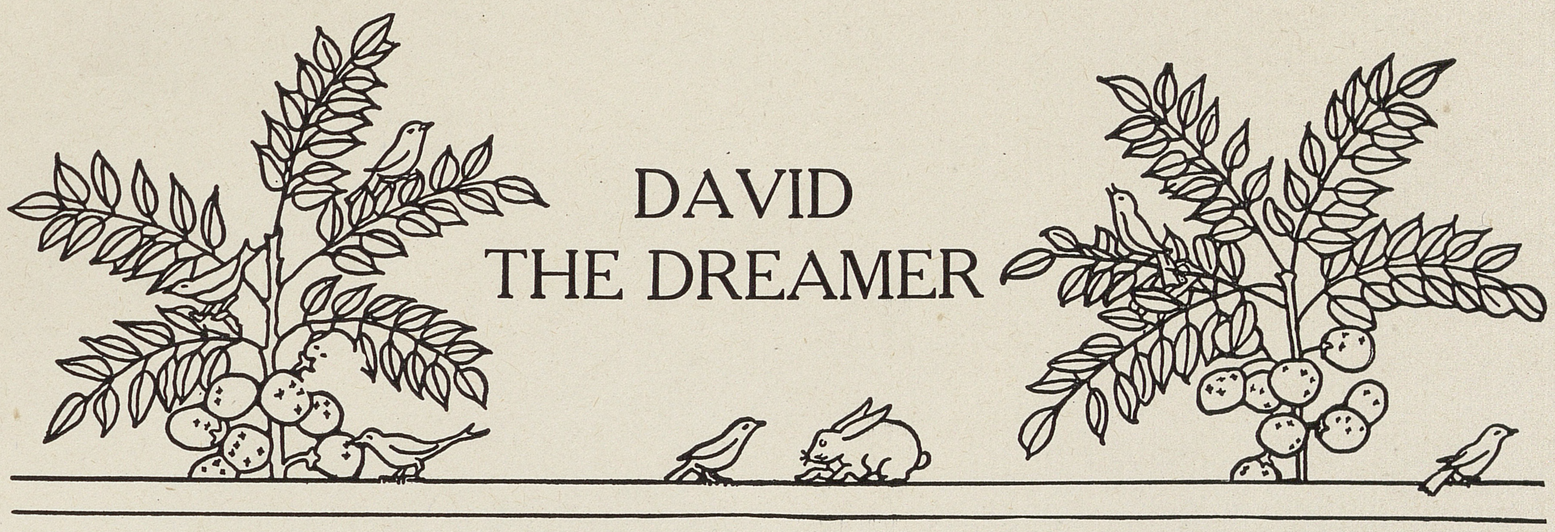


DAVID THE DREAMER

"We are met here to-day," said David, "to celebrate the third birthday of our friend Fido"

DAVID *the* DREAMER

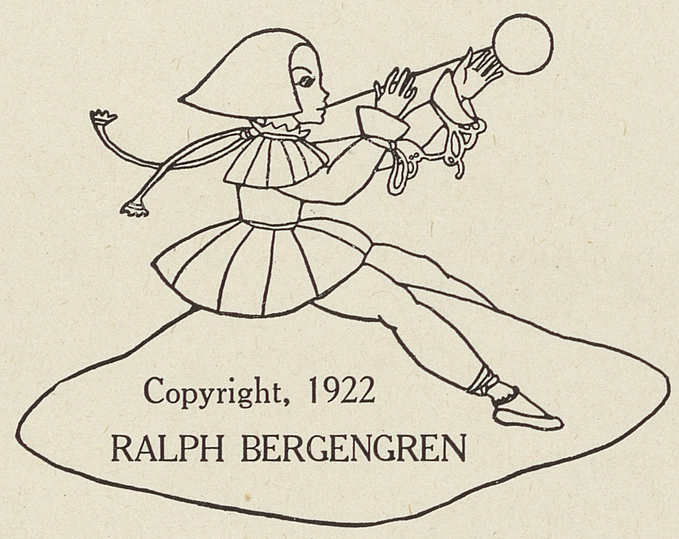
His Book of Dreams

By

RALPH BERGENGREN

Illustrated by TOM FREUD

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY PRESS, BOSTON



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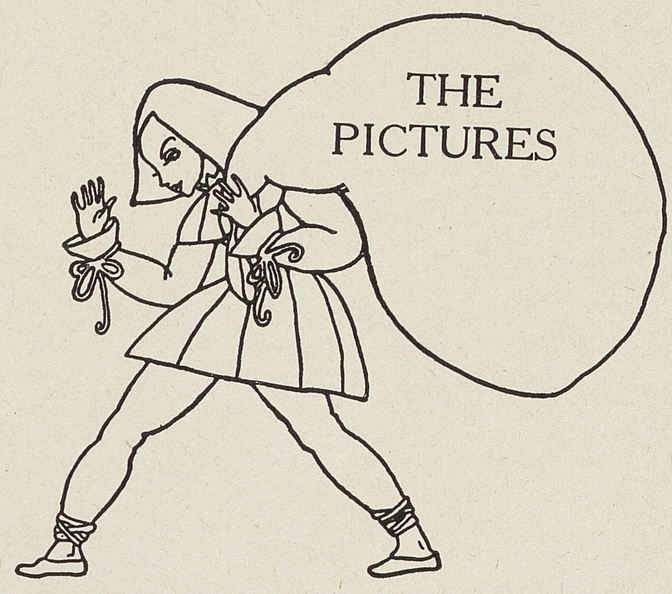

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DAVID THE DREAMER

HIS BOOK OF DREAMS

I

How Fido Gave a Birthday Party and Who Came to It

DAVID knew he was dreaming because he had on the white suit, very much like the Clown's in the Circus, that he often wore in dreams, and never anywhere else. Fido was also dressed in a white suit, with neat ruffles around his legs, and the neatest ruffle of all around his tail. Fido always spoke doggerel in dreams, and David was not at all surprised when he said, jumping up and down and wagging his ruffled tail,

"This is a great day for me.
This is my birthday, you see.
Last year I was two,
And this year I am three.
And so what say you
To a birthday partee?"

"I'll ask my mother," said David.

"No you don't,"

said Fido quickly.

"I 'd prefer
That you did n't ask her."

"But why not?" asked David. "She 'd have Cook make a birthday cake, and get the ice cream, and—"

"I 've ordered the cake from a baker,"
explained Fido,
"I guess he 'll be able to make her.
I 've asked a friend from China
And he 's coming on a liner.
I 've invited Simple Simon
And a boy I 've got no rhyme on.
This is Fido's own affair.
We don't want no mothers there."

David followed Fido across the lawn to the barn, where Fido's own house stood beside the barn door; and when Fido went into his house David got down on his hands and knees and squeezed in after him. It was the first time he had ever been in Fido's house, and he was surprised to see how conveniently it was arranged. Fido's dining room was on one side of the hallway, and his bedroom on the other; and beyond the bedroom was a shower bath, like David's father's but much smaller. Fido's bed was a four-poster, and David's mother would have been delighted to see how nicely it was made up with a many-colored crazy quilt properly folded across the bottom. It was a very neat house, and David got a glimpse of the pantry with a row of tin boxes marked BEEF BONES, CHICKEN BONES, MUTTON BONES, and OTHER BONES, and a porcelain sink with hot and cold water to wash the dishes. He would have liked to stay longer and look round the house, but Fido trotted through the hall and out at the back door, which also surprised David and made him wonder what had become of the barn. But it was pleasant to be able to stand up again on his feet.

Trees came up almost to the back door, but there was a long, straight road through them, at the distant end of which, a mile or more away, David could see blue water and guessed that there might be a seaport town. A baker's wagon was disappearing in a cloud of dust far down this road, where it had met and passed a boy wearing a tall, pointed, white hat, like a dunce cap, and carrying a bicycle on his back.

"Simple Simon has a bike,"

said Fido,

"It is his joy and pride.
He always takes it on a hike
But has n't learned to ride."

Then Fido turned off the road into a narrow path which ended at a clearing where three boys sat at a table on which was a cake. There had been birthday candles on the cake, but Simple Simon, who had already got there, was eating the last of them. Anybody could have seen at a glance that one of the boys came from China, for he had Chinese eyes and wore a hat like a lamp shade. But it was hard to say where the other boy came from. David looked at him curiously—which is the first step toward getting acquainted with anybody.

"My name is Norval," said the boy, after looking curiously at David. "On the Grampian Hills my father feeds his flocks. Does n't he, Fido?" he added, patting Fido's head, for the little dog had sat down at the table and begun lapping milk from a large bowl.

Fido lifted his nose from the bowl and barked.

"Those Grampian Hills,"
said he,
"are white as snow.
He 's got so many sheep, you know."

"My father, he 's got a sheep too," said Simple Simon. "Only it 's a cow."

"China velly much top-side placee sheep," said the boy from that country. "You savvy sing-song:—

'Maly havee one-piece smallee lamb,
Fleecee all litee.
Maly go here-there, lambee go all-same Maly'?"

To David this speech sounded silly, but he had to admit that a boy from China could n't be expected to recite "Mary's Little Lamb" in plain English. He picked a bluebell and waved it to attract attention to himself, trying at the same time to take a bite out of one of the big red apples that decorated the table. But the apple was disappointing. It was as hard as a croquet ball.

"We are met here to-day," said David, "to celebrate the third birthday of our friend Fido. A better dog never wagged his tail."

"Bow-wow!" barked Fido.

"Hurrah!" cried Norval.

"Hullah!" cried the boy from China.

"Me too!" shouted Simple Simon.

"I have played with Fido," continued David, "for three years, and have found him a dog of the very highest principles. He is gentle, kind, brave, affectionate, and intelligent: in fact it may be said of him 'This *is* a dog!' I wish him a happy birthday, and many bones."

"Hullah! Hullah!" cried the boy from China.

"Bow-wow-wow!" barked Fido.

"Me too!" shouted Simon.

"David! Da-vid! Dav-*id!*" called David's Mother. "What are you doing, child?"

At the sound of that voice David looked back toward Fido's house, and saw his mother—only she was no bigger than a little girl and wore blue gingham rompers—romping in a great hurry along the path under the trees. Anybody could see that she was coming to Fido's party and was afraid she would be late. David was glad to see her, for, although he had often played with his mother, he had never played with her when she was his own size. He had never thought of it before, but now he thought what fun you could have with your mother if she were no older than you are yourself. He looked at Fido to see what the little dog thought of it—but Fido had disappeared. He looked at the boy from China—but the boy from China had disappeared. He looked at Norval—but Norval had disappeared.

When Mother tucks you up at night,
You disappear till morning light.

But if asleep you dream, why then,
In Dreamland you appear again.

And when your dream, however queer,
Is done once more you disappear.

When mother opens bedroom door,
Then you appear at home once more.

David knew by his feelings that he was disappearing himself. He tried not to, for he wanted to play with his mother while she was a little girl, but it was no use. And the last thing he saw before he disappeared completely was his mother in her little blue gingham rompers skipping as fast as she could along the woodland path.

II

How David Went to Do an Errand at the Grocery and Walked among the Snow-capped Mountains

HOW he got there David did not know, but he was in the grocery store doing an errand for Cook, who had written out a list of things on a piece of paper. Mr. Smith, the grocer, put on his spectacles, and read it aloud like this:—

"Hick's Holesome Hayseed,
The Best Breakfast Food.
Some likes it fried, sir,
But I like it stewed.
One raisin, one prune, and
One cold storage egg,
A cent's worth of salt and
One wooden nutmeg.

"I'll put them right up, sir," added Mr. Smith, "and give my love to Cook." And he climbed on the flour barrel to reach down a red, white, and blue package of Hick's Holesome Hayseed.

David wandered about the store, admiring all the wonderful things that a grocer has to sell, and so he came to the back door. It was the first time he had ever noticed that there were snow-capped mountains, like a lot of circus tents, behind the grocery, and that a path led from the back door right in among the mountains. David followed the path, and pretty soon he overtook a coal-black man, with a long nose and hardly any clothes on, to speak of,

pushing a perambulator with a red-and-white cover, and when David peeked under the cover he saw a coal-black baby, eating bread and milk.

"Don't you dare try to make that baby laugh," said the coal-black man ferociously. "Every man, woman, and child I meet stops and tries to make that baby laugh, and I won't stand any more such nonsense. No, sir. If that baby wanted to laugh, he'd laugh. They poke their fingers at him. They make faces at him. They talk baby-talk to him—*'Umpty-umpty. Toodley-oodley. Pitty itty sing, darlin' dumplin' ducky-diddle-daddle. Chck! Chck!'* They tickle his tummy. They want to see his toes. Would *you* like it yourself? I ask you. Would *I* like it? Not a bit. Not a bit. You just mind your own business, young man, and don't try to make that baby laugh, or I—I'll strike you." And he raised one finger so savagely that David felt himself turning pale.

"Shoo!" added the coal-black man fiercely, just as if David were a hen. "Shoo! Shoo! Shoo! Shoo! Shoo!"

David took to his heels and ran till he was out of breath.

Then he began to walk again, and pretty soon he overtook a huntsman, with a long nose on his face and a long gun on his shoulder, who was pursuing a rabbit. He was going along in a great hurry, for the rabbit was in plain sight further along the path, but his legs worked so stiffly that David walked right past him.

"Hey you!" called the huntsman. "Stop a bit, can't you. Got something to say to you."

"Yes, sir," said David, stopping so that the huntsman could catch up.

"Don't you dare play with that rabbit," said the huntsman sharply, when he had caught

up. "Here am I, out for a day's sport, which the doctor says I need for my health. And every man, woman, and child that comes along has to stop and play with that rabbit. They pick it up by the ears. They cuddle it. They smooth its fur. They talk baby-talk to it—'*Oose pitty-itty wabbit is oo, bunnie-wunnie?*' How'd you like it yourself, young man, if you were out hunting a rabbit—doctor's orders, too—and everybody stopped to play with it? *Can't* they see without telling that a man can't hunt a rabbit when somebody's playing with it? If you stop to play with that rabbit," said the huntsman bitterly, "I—I'll hunt you. That's what."

"You couldn't catch me," said David.

"I know it," admitted the huntsman. "It's an empty threat. But I could if I hadn't forgotten to oil my joints. When I'm well oiled I go as fast as a railway train—*wsh-h-h-h-h-h-h-h-h.* I go," shouted the huntsman, raising his voice to a shriek, for David was walking rapidly away from him, "like a *stre-e-e-e-e-e-e-e-e-e-ak.*"

David caught up with the rabbit.

"Don't you stop and play with *me*," said the rabbit quickly. "I'm busy. I'm being hunted. It's great fun. He can't catch me, and he knows it. But it's good exercise for both of us."

So David left the rabbit behind him, and pretty soon he met a man with a long nose, a tall hat, a bundle on his back, and a dog at his heels.

"Don't you dare speak to that dog," shouted the man in great excitement as he approached David, "Here I am, an aging man, trying to get to my daughter's wedding before they've eaten all the wedding-cake. And every man, woman, and child I meet

has to stop and speak to that dog. They scratch his head, they do. They pull his ears. They pat him on the back. They talk baby-talk to him—*'Doggie-doggie woggie-woggie.'* They want to shake hands with him. Oh, I'll stand no more of it! You just mind your own business, young man, and don't you speak to that dog, or I—I'll hit you with my best clothes. They're in this bag," he added, "so's I can put them on when I get to the wedding."

So David stepped aside and let the man and the dog go by without stopping them, and pretty soon he caught up with a boy with a long nose who had a spade over his shoulder.

"Hey there!" called the boy, as David passed him, "Don't you dare say anything about *me* to the worms. I'm going fishing, I am," he shouted indignantly, "and my mother knows it; and every time I dig up a worm there isn't any worm there. Somebody's been and told him I'm coming. That's what. Don't you dare say a word about *me* to the worms, or I—I'll dig you."

David paid no attention whatever to that boy. He had never spoken to a worm in his life, and never expected to. He kept on walking, and pretty soon he met an old woman with a long nose, and a bag on her back, and a baby with a long nose in the bag, and a little girl with a long nose close behind her.

"Don't you dare ask that little girl how old she is," said the old woman crossly, as soon as she got within speaking distance. "Every man, woman, and child I meet stops and asks that young-one how old she is. As if anybody cared a rap how old she is!

The snow came softly down in such big flakes they looked like white flowers

It makes her conceited. It makes her so stuck-up there's no living with her. Always a-botherin' me with 'Grandma, Grandma, ask me how old I am now.' You just mind your own business, young man, and don't you dare ask that little girl how old she is, or I—I'll throw the baby at you."

And she reached over her shoulder and grasped the baby by its left leg.

David had never in his life seen such a cross old woman. He hurried past without so much as a glance at the little girl, and was glad enough when he got farther away from them than any old woman could throw a baby. But there was something about this little girl and her grandmother that reminded him of something else — only he could n't think what it was. He thought and thought and thought, putting one foot in front of the other, and leaving farther and farther behind the cross old woman and her granddaughter, the boy who was going fishing, the man on his way to his daughter's wedding, the huntsman chasing the rabbit, and the coal-black man pushing the baby carriage. After a while it began to snow, and the snow came softly down in such big flakes they looked like white flowers, but that did not surprise David, for his Uncle William had once shown him a snowflake under a microscope, and that was just the way it looked.

Suddenly David clapped his hands. He knew now what the old woman and the little girl reminded him of. They reminded him of Cook's Aunt Mary and Cook's Aunt Mary's little girl Bridget, only of course Aunt Mary and Bridget did n't have such long noses. And that reminded him of Cook, and Cook reminded him of his errand, and his errand reminded him of the grocery—and there he was. Mr. Smith had just finished doing up the packages,

and, when he saw David, he said, speaking faster and faster because he was getting smaller and smaller every second, —

"Hick's Holesome Hayseed,
I find I have got.
The prune and the raisin
I find I have not.
But here is a dish-mop
And one peanut shell.
I think she will find, sir,
They do just as well.

"There you are, young man, and don't you dare forget to give my love to COOK."

When he said "COOK," Mr. Smith was so small that David could hardly see him, running about on top of the counter, and as soon as he had said it he vanished completely. And David was alone on a long, straight road hurrying to get home and give Mr. Smith's love to Cook.

Hurry, hurry, David.
Hurry on your way.
Do not stop a second.
Do not pause to play.

Hurry, hurry, hurry.
Home by hook or crook.
Don't forget the grocer
Sends his love to Cook.

Hurry, hurry, hurry.
Hurry faster yet.
Lest that loving message
You should quite forget.

Stir your little legs, sir.
Read it like a book.
Mr. Smith, the grocer,
Sends his love to Cook.

III

How a Book Read David

IT was a fine day in summer, and David had done a number of things that he could not afterward remember, and been in a number of places; but he came at last to a picket fence with an opening in it, and on the other side of the fence a pear tree, and under the tree, two very fine pears and a book. He ate one of the pears, and it tasted like strawberry ice cream — which was a pleasant surprise — and then he lay down on his back, and opened the book.

Now the odd thing about this book was that when David began reading the book, the book began reading David. That is to say, when David was reading in the book like this, —

> John had three sisters, Maud, Mary, and Martha, who were all very fond of green cheese; and he had also one full moon, which he gen-er-ous-ly di-vid-ed into four equal parts. What kind of a moon did John, Maud, Mary, and Martha each have then ?

the letters ran around, and changed places, and many of them jumped off the book out of sight, and he read this: —

> David, David, how do you do ?
> Your mother has put you to bed.
> She thinks you are sleeping the whole night through,
> And you 're reading me instead.

And when he read in the book like this, —

A star is small
Beside the sun.
Its light is just
A little one.
It teaches me
This lesson plain:
To *Do My Best*
And *Not Complain.* —

the letters changed round, and a whole crowd of letters came climbing back on the page, and he read like this: —

> David, you lose too many things, altogether too many things. Only day before yesterday you lost one of your brand-new rubbers off in a mud puddle, and came home without it. Have you no conscience, child? And nobody ever knows where you 've left your handkerchief. And last winter you lost the new overcoat that your parents had just bought for you. Oh, David, David! I don't know what to do with you. Why, you would lose your head and hands and feet if they were not fastened on you!

It was a queer book. And another odd thing about it was the way the leaves left as soon as you had read them. When you started to turn a leaf over, it just disappeared. But there were always plenty of new leaves, so that it was the kind of a book that would easily last you to read as long as you lived.

In this odd way David read several pages, and then he came to what looked so much like a real story that he hoped the letters would keep still until he finished it. For it began just the way a real story ought to, and the characters were quite interesting.

It was the kind of a book that would easily last you to read as long as you lived

Once upon a time there was a family of Pigs, Mr. and Mrs. Percival Pig and Percival, Jr., who lived in a beautiful pigpen with all modern improvements. Percival, Jr., was a lovely child. His first thought in the morning was "What can I do to-day to please my dear parents?" And his last thought at night was "What have I omitted to do to-day to please my dear parents?" If he thought of anything he had not done he could not sleep. He never lost his new rubbers or mislaid his handkerchief or forgot to say "Pardon me," or "If you please," or "After you," or "Thank you," nor hinted for a penny when his good Uncle James Porker came to visit. As for his deportment in school, it was such that the school department had to print a new kind of deportment card with 150 on it instead of 100 to show how good he was. It is of just such little pigs as Percival that we make the famous Rosebud-Brand Breakfast Sausage. Ask your grocer.

David was disappointed in this story, though he hardly knew why. He turned the page, and the leaf left as usual. On the next page the lively letters hurriedly arranged themselves in rows, and David read, —

One day last week, sir, I have heard
A *Most Disgraceful* thing occurred.

Your mother disagreed with you,
And you into a *Tantrum* flew.

You *Stamped Your Feet.* You *Answered Back.*
You were a *Little Maniac.*

You ceased to be your mother's joy,
And were a *Horrid* little boy.

David shut the book — and the book disappeared. And so did David. Like the leaves he left. He wasn't there any more under the pear tree.

Home again! Home again!
Snug in your bed.
How soft the white pillow
Right under your head!

How pleasant to be in
That warm, cosy nest!
Sometimes of all places
Your bed is the best.

Off again! Off again!
Who can say where?
For any surprises
It 's wise to prepare.

How odd the adventures
You follow or flee!
'Twixt sunset and sunrise
What queer things you see!

IV

How Fido Found the Buried Treasure of Blackbeard the Pirate and Spent It for Canary-bird Seed

DAVID and Fido were digging in the garden, David with a small spade, and Fido with his front paws. One minute it was a bright sunny day, and the next minute the garden was all in shadow; for it was the kind of a day when big clouds like soapsuds float across the sky, and now you see the sun shine, and now you don't.

Suddenly Fido began jumping up and down and wagging his tail and barking with great joy and excitement.

"O, David, I 'm the lucky pup!"

barked Fido,

"Come quick, and see what I 've dug up.
Some wicked pirate, it is clear,
Has been and buried treasure here."

David dropped his small spade, and came running, and he was almost as joyful and excited as Fido himself. There in the ground where Fido had been digging lay a nickel. David picked it up, and breathed on it, and polished it with his handkerchief—which was better for the nickel than it was for the handkerchief—and it was as handsome a nickel as anybody could wish to see.

"The next thing to do is to spend it,"

barked Fido,

"To spend it! To spend it!
So as for this digging, let 's end it.
And go, you and me,
On an innocent spree."

This idea seemed good to David. But it was Fido's nickel, and David wanted to be perfectly fair to him.

"Don't you think, Fido," said he, "that you'd better put it in my bunny bank, and let me keep it for you?"

"No money in a bank for *me*,"

said Fido,

"I 'd rather spend it pleasantly.
I found this nickel, and I say
We go and spend it right away."

"All right," said David, who liked this plan very much better himself. "Let 's go to the drug store and spend it for candy."

So, with the five-cent piece safe in his fist, David climbed over the garden wall while Fido ran round under the gate. But he was hardly down on the other side when he saw a fierce-looking man, with a red silk rag tied round his head, running as hard as he could along the road. The hair and whiskers of the fierce-looking man were as black as ink, and his nose as red as red paint, and his eyes as green as grass, and he wore a kind of petticoat and a pair of big, shiny rubber boots that flapped round his legs.

"Hey, you *boy*," yelled the fierce-looking man in a hoarse voice, waving a stout sword

that David knew at once was a cutlass. "You put that five cents back where you found it. You put it back this minute, do you hear *me!* I'm Blackbeard the Pirate, I am, and I won't have you spending my five cents. You put it back or I—I'll spank you."

But David was already down off the wall, with Fido beside him, and it was too late to get back into the garden. He ran and ran. And so did Fido. And after them the Pirate, but his rubber boots were so heavy that he couldn't quite catch up. Clump-clump-clump-clump went his rubber boots, and "You put back my five cents, do you hear *me!*" yelled the Pirate in his hoarse voice. But at last David saw ahead of them a town with a wall around it, and a gate in the wall, and at the gate a brave policeman talking with a beautiful nursemaid who was taking care of a baby. When he heard them all coming, the policeman turned his head and looked at the Pirate, and the Pirate turned round and ran as hard as he could in the other direction, but still yelling at David over his shoulder, "You put back that five cents do you hear *me!*"

"Don't worry about *him*, little man," said the policeman. "He's always chasing people, but there's no real harm in him. Not a bit." And he began talking again to the beautiful nursemaid.

"If you see my mother, little man," said the baby, "I wish you'd tell her Maggie is neglecting me."

"If you say anything to that child's mother, little man," said the beautiful nursemaid, "you'll wish you hadn't, that's all. Now run along and spend your five cents."

David and Fido ran along. It was a very neat and pretty town, now they were in it.

The houses were made of building-blocks, just like those in the playroom at home, only much larger, and the people in the streets all wore bright-colored clothes like the people in the pictures David had once seen in a book called "Middle Ages." Pretty soon they came to a store, and when David opened the door it rang a bell, and an old lady with white corkscrew curls and large, round spectacles bobbed up from behind the counter. She bobbed up so quick that she made David jump.

"Please, m'am," said David, "do you sell candy?"

"The thing *I 'd* prefer is a bone,"

said Fido,

"But that is a taste of my own.
So some candy will do
If it 's such as will chew."

"All out of candy to-day," said the old lady briskly, bobbing down and then up again. "Plenty of canary-bird seed of all flavors. Just as good. Try it." David was disappointed, but when she bobbed down and bobbed up with a heaping tablespoonful of canary-bird seed, he was too polite not to taste it and offer a taste to Fido.

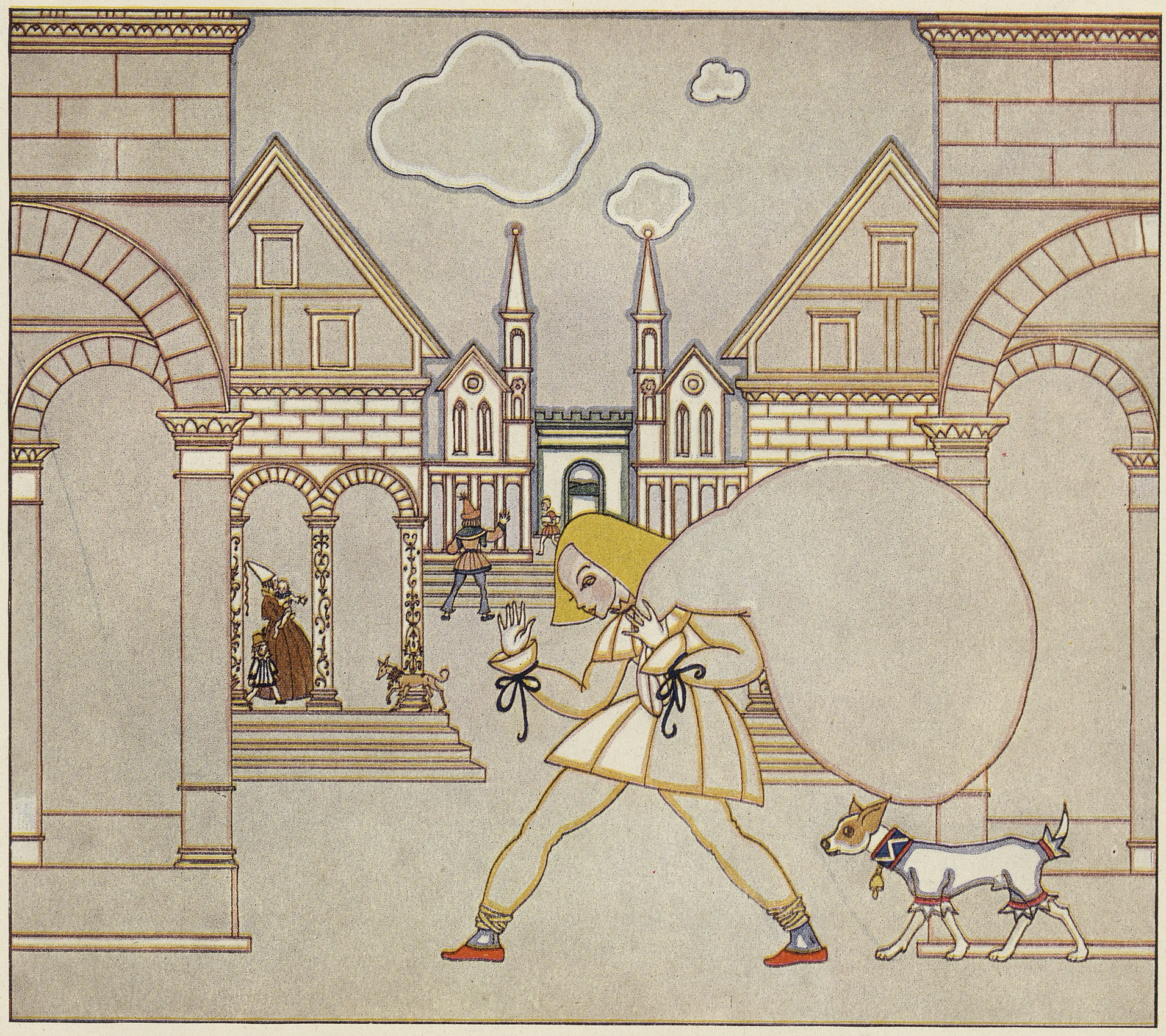
"Why, goody!" exclaimed David. "It tastes like candy."

"I thought it would taste like a stone,"

said Fido,

"But really it tastes like a bone."

Once David saw a lady in a brown dress who he felt sure was the mother of the baby he had seen in the gateway



"That's the way with canary-bird seed," said the old lady. "It tastes like anything you want. It's of all flavors."

"I'll take five cents' worth," said David.

"Five cents' worth!" cried the old lady, and held up both hands in astonishment. "Five cents! That's a lot of money, little man. *Did* you say five cents?"

"If you please, m'am," said David.

"Well, I suppose it's all right," said the old lady doubtfully. "Five cents! I'll have to get a big bag." She bobbed down and bobbed up with a large bag, which she began filling with canary-bird seed from a barrel. After a while the barrel was empty.

"Five cents!" said the old lady. "Five cents' worth of canary-bird seed. I'll have to open another barrel." So she opened another barrel, and that almost filled the bag.

"There you are, little man," said the old lady. She picked up the nickel, put it in her mouth, and swallowed it. "Five cents' worth of canary-bird seed! Well, I never!"

David shouldered the bag, and it was about all he could carry. Fido followed, and they started back to the gate.

It was a long, long way back, and it seemed to David that they were attracting more and more attention. People stopped whatever they were doing, and stared at them. Mothers brought their children to the doors to look at them as they went by; and once David saw a lady in a brown dress, with a child in her arms and another at her skirts, whom he felt sure was the mother of the baby he had seen in the gateway. The baby looked like her. But he decided to say nothing about the nursemaid and

the policeman, because, after all, it was none of his business, and they might still be there when he got back. Newsboys began shouting news about them, so that men ran after the newsboys to buy their papers. "Here's your evening paper," shouted the newsboys. "All the latest news! All about Blackbeard the Pirate and his buried treasure! All about David the Five-Cent Boy! All about Fido the Poet-Pup! Read it! Read it!"

"I 'm tired of being looked at,"

said Fido.

"I wish I were home on the mat.
The way folks observe us,
It makes me *so* nervous
I hardly know where I am at."

But at last David saw the gate and the policeman and the beautiful nursemaid and the baby and, quite a long way off, the Pirate sitting waiting in the middle of the road.

David put down his bag.

"Please, sir," he said to the policeman. "There he is. He's waiting for us, sir. And we want to get home."

"Don't worry about *him*, little man," said the policeman. "There's no real harm in him. Not a bit. You just say, 'Booh!' to him. Like that—'Booh! Booh!'"

"Booh! Booh!" said the beautiful nursemaid, with a giggle.

"Booh! Booh!" said the baby. "Did you see my mother?"

David picked up his bag and went on again. As he approached the Pirate, Blackbeard got up and fingered his cutlass.

"Hah!" he yelled. "I know what you've done with my five cents, you *boy*. You've spent it. Hah-h-h-h-h!" And he leaped straight at David.

"Booh!" said David. "Booh! Booh!"

And before he knew it the Pirate was almost out of sight, running as hard as he could in his big rubber boots, and David and Fido were climbing over the garden wall. Cook was looking at them out of the kitchen window, but what became of the canary-bird seed David never knew.

V

How the Dough Ran Away from Cook and David Pursued the Dough

Cook, Oh! Cook is short and stout.
Her eyes are mild and blue.
Except, of course, when she 's put out
At something that you do.

Cook, Oh ! Cook knows how to make
The most delicious pie,
And pudding, too, and bread, and cake
That lifts you to the sky.

Cook, Oh ! Cook has hair of red.
Her heart is good as gold.
But when she sends you off to bed,
You do as you are told.

Cook, Oh ! Cook quite often sings
A pretty Irish tune
While mixing up her nice frostings,
And lets you lick the spoon.

DAVID was in the kitchen watching Cook make pies, which is always an interesting thing to do. She had finished kneading the dough, and got out her roller, but when she turned her back to look at her oven the dough, which had been lying quietly enough on the bread board, got up cautiously on four long doughy legs. Before David could say

a word to Cook the dough had jumped off the table, trotted across the kitchen, and was out through the door.

"Quick! Quick!" cried David, running after it, "There goes the dough!"

"Why bless my soul, well did you ever!" cried Cook, and without stopping to take off her apron or put on her hat, she ran after David.

The dough ran down the path. The gate was closed, but the dough leaped it nimbly. David leaped it nimbly. Cook leaped it nimbly. The dough turned down the street and headed for open country, and David was right behind the dough, and Cook right behind David. People stared at them from doors and windows. Wagons and automobiles, and a load of hay, and a nursemaid wheeling a baby in a perambulator, and people who were crossing the street got out of the way in a hurry, just as they do when they see the fire-engine coming. For some time it was nip and tuck between David and the dough; but they ran faster than Cook, so that when David looked back she seemed to be jumping up and down in one place, and the sound of her voice calling "Dough! Dough! David! David!" became fainter and fainter.

But four legs are faster than two. Run as hard as he could, David dropped behind the dough. The dough ran over the top of a hill, and when David got to the top of the hill himself, there was no dough in sight.

David walked down the hill, which ended at the bottom with a high wall that stood right across the road. A robin, wearing a blue instead of a red vest, was talking with a rabbit on top of the wall, and, when he saw David, he said, as if explaining himself,—

"I make it my habit
Whenever I may
To talk with a rabbit
In this cosy way.

"Their wit is so funny!
Their thought so complete!
To talk with a bunny
Is always a treat."

"That's right, too," said the rabbit, cocking one ear and making a proud gesture with his paw. "Ask me something."

"We've lost the dough," explained David. "Cook was making pies—"

The rabbit sat up on his hind legs, and used his left paw to twirl his mustache.

"First there was *dough*," said he, "and then there was dough *not*. Ha! Ha! That's a sample, a mere trifle, mark you, but it shows the kind of a witty fellow I am. Done like a flash, too. Dough not—doughnut. Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!"

At this sally the robin laughed so hard he fell off the wall and had to fly back.

"There are so many varieties," added the rabbit more seriously. "There's the *do* that you sing:—

"*Do* re mi fa sol la si *do*.
Up we come and down we go.
Do si la sol fa mi re *do*.

"There's the *dough* that you bake with. And there's the *dough-bird*, which is a local name

in the United States for the Eskimo curlew, *numenius borealis.* And the dear little *doe* that is also a dear little deer. And that interesting extinct bird, the *didus ineptus* or dodo. There's information for you, my little man, eh Robin?"

"It's an education to hear you," said the robin admiringly. "On *any* subject."

"How long *is* this wall?" asked David anxiously.

"Miles and miles," said the rabbit. "But if you want to get in," he added, squinting along the wall, "I think I see the gate coming now."

David followed the direction of the rabbit's squint, and saw an opening in the wall moving in his direction. It stopped long enough for him to get through, and then went on again, very much like a railroad train stopping at a station.

The first thing that David saw on the other side of the wall was a small brown deer eating cherries out of a blue bowl. It looked at him with round, soft eyes, and wagged its stump of a tail so hard that the bell on its collar jingled.

"It's a fine day, sir," said the little brown deer sociably. "Would you mind scratching my back? But don't sit on the daisies. They don't like it, you know. You wouldn't yourself."

David looked around for somewhere to sit down, and several daisies hurriedly moved out of the way and left a place large enough for him to sit on, with the little brown deer beside him. It was very pleasant in the garden. He could hear the rabbit and the robin talking on the wall behind him—something about a man named Einstein, but just what they were saying David couldn't quite hear. He rested contentedly after his long, hard run, and scratched the back of his new acquaintance.

"That rabbit," said the little brown deer presently in a gentle whisper, "is a fat bluffer. Plenty of information, but *no* common sense Ask *me* something."

"Where is the dough?" asked David.

"Right here," answered the little deer. "I'm a doe myself."

"What I *mean*," explained David, "is the kind of dough Cook makes when she—"

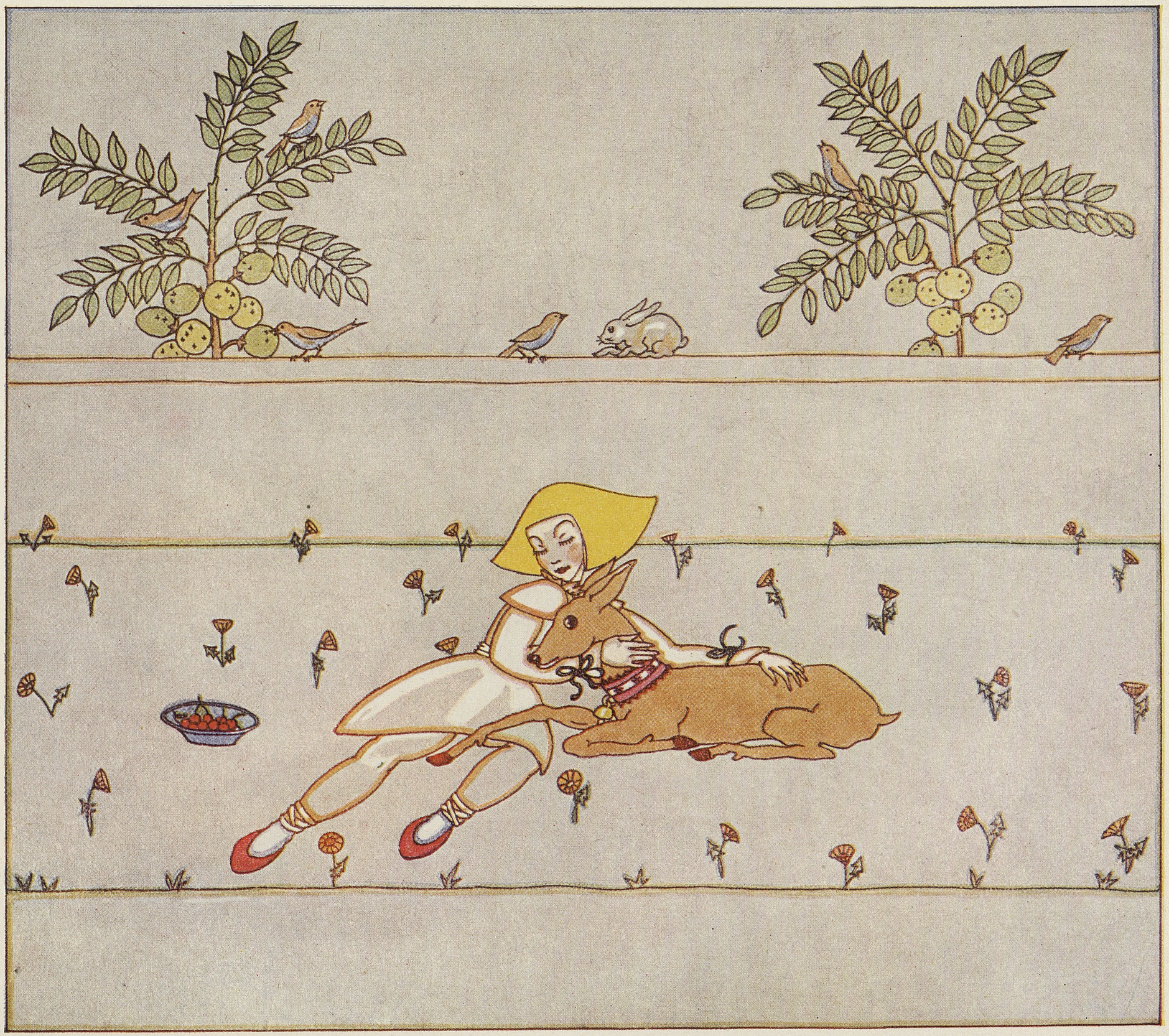
"Look out, my little man!" called the rabbit suddenly. "Here she comes now."

David and the doe looked around quickly, just in time to see the rabbit scuttle along the wall in one direction, and the robin fly off in another. And where they had been appeared the face of Cook, rising over the wall like a moon, first her head, and then her body, and then her feet. She was wiping her hands on her apron, and running as hard as she could, and anybody might have seen at a glance that, instead of waiting for the gate, she had run right up hill on nothing at all, and was coming straight over the top of the wall and down on the other side. And as Cook came over the wall she got rounder and rounder and rounder, and less like a cook, and more and more and more like a very large toy balloon.

"I greatly fear, David," said the doe gently, "that she is going to blow up."

And Cook blew up.

Bang! went Cook—and David found himself sitting up in bed with his arm around the pillow.



"That rabbit," said the little brown deer, "is a fat bluffer. Plenty of information, but ***no*** *common sense"*

VI

How David Got Lost at Sea in the Goldfish Bowl

IF you look long enough at the goldfish bowl, and think hard enough, and imagine yourself small enough, you will see that the water in the bowl is an ocean.

In the bowl an ocean lies —
If you were the proper size,
If you were so very small
You could scarce be seen at all;

If you had a little boat,
You could set yourself afloat
On the waves that rise and roll
In that placid-looking bowl.

There are waves, and fishes too,
Quite invisible to you
When you are your natural size,
Looking at it with your eyes.

But it changes to your sight
When you are a tiny mite,
Wondering what lands may be
Way across the Goldfish Sea.

Very-Little-David stood on the edge of the goldfish bowl. A beach of glass, like the shelf in the bathroom where you put things when you wash your face, but miles and miles long, stretched away as far as he could see on either side of him. In front lay the

ocean. Whether it was blue or green or silver-gray or violet, he couldn't have told you. All these colors were in it under a summer-blue sky, where clouds made castles, and a cloud-camel with six humps was turning slowly into a cloud-elephant with a man on his back.

But the best thing of all was that you had the place to yourself, nobody around to bother you, nobody to tell you what you might do or what you mightn't. And a boat waiting for you if you wanted to go rowing.

David pushed the boat into the sea, and wet both feet. His toes liked it, and made a song:—

"Wet feet! Wet feet! Sloshing in your shoes!
That 's the Happy Life, sir, doing as you choose.
Dry feet! Dry feet! Always being told
If you get your feet wet — *you 'll catch cold!*"

But he had to get aboard carefully, for the ocean was deep up to the edge of the beach. If he fell in, there was no nurse nor anybody else to pull him out.

It was like Columbus starting from Europe to discover the United States of America.

David dipped his oars deep in the Goldfish Sea, and rowed so hard his boat made a silver streak in the water that seemed to fasten it to the beach by a long line. After a time you couldn't see the end of the line any more, for the beach had disappeared, and so it went right out of sight over the end of the horizon. Then the sea grew rough, and the sky gray, with one big bright star to light it; and when Columbus looked over his shoulder to see how near he was to the United States of America, he saw only another horizon, which went all around the sea like an enormous hoop.

Any voice, even a goldfish's, sounded good to David

There is something very discouraging about being out of sight of land in a small boat, especially when you find out, with a sinking heart, that you don't know which way to row to get home again. It is like getting lost anywhere else, only much worse; for there isn't any Policeman or Kind Lady to help you, and, although a lot of people you don't know all looking at you at once is bad enough, nobody at all looking at you makes you feel even more serious. Very-Little-David felt serious indeed. He told himself bravely that there was nothing to worry over, but he knew better. He told himself sensibly that it would do no good to cry, but he did cry. So there you are. And the rude waves of the Goldfish Sea tossed him up and down in his boat and scattered his tears far and wide.

"Thought I felt rain," said a large goldfish, coming to the surface. "Nothin' but a boy in a boat sheddin' tears. Oh, pshaw!" And he started to go down again.

Any voice, even a goldfish's, sounded good to David.

"Come back," he shouted. "Oh, please, please come back."

"If you'd shed *crumbs* instead of *tears*," said the goldfish, popping his head out of the waves, "there'd be some sense in it. Tears! *Idle* tears! Oh, pshaw!"

"I'm lost," explained David.

"You *don't* say so!" exclaimed the goldfish. He had rather a silly face, but he looked harmless and sympathetic, and he sounded exactly like a Kind Lady when he added, "Where do you live, you dear, sweet, cunning little boy? But if you live outside the Bowl," he went on, speaking more like a goldfish, "I'm terrified I can't help you. For —

"Over the edge of the Goldfish Bowl
Where never a fish may go,
What is beyond, dear soul, my soul,
That never a fish may know?
Round and round in the Bowl we swim:
To each little fish his day.
What is beyond its shining rim
What little fish can say?

"Oh, pshaw!"

"If only I could get ashore," said David hopefully, "I'd find a policeman—"

"Just take my fin," said the goldfish.

It was a lot easier said than done, but David managed it by lying flat in the boat and reaching over the bow till he got a good hold of a friendly fin, and by hooking his toes over the seat he kept from being pulled out of his boat into the Goldfish Sea. But it was an unsatisfactory way to travel. What made it worse was that the goldfish couldn't, or wouldn't swim straight, but just as soon as you thought he was going in one direction he went in another. Now and then he started to swim right down, and David had to grasp the fin with both hands, and hook his toes harder than ever over the seat, and lift with all his might to keep the good fellow anywhere within reach. Sometimes the waves went over his head, and washed his face, and he could see deep down in the bowl where a school of little fishes was following along and looking up with great interest and curiosity. He knew it was a school because they all had their schoolbooks.

But they made progress, such as it was. At last David saw the glass beach. The sea

grew smoother and smoother, like dough when Cook rolls it out for a pie. David put his head down in the sea, and said, "Thank you very much, sir," to his finny friend. Then he got out his oars and began to row.

There was nobody on the glass beach but a stout gentleman in a striped blue-and-white bathing-suit, whom David recognized as a policeman of his acquaintance, though he had grown so stout he was hard to recognize. The policeman was running to and fro on the glass beach to dry himself after his bath, with his elbows in, and his stomach out, and his dimpled legs going up and down more than they went back and forth, so that, although he thought he was running quite fast, he was really running quite slowly.

"Good exercise!" panted the policeman. "Nothin' like it! Puts on your flesh!

"How 's your father?
And your mother?
And your darling
Baby brother?
How 's the bow-wow?
How 's the kitten?
How 's the cook, with
Whom I 'm smitten?
How 's the —"

"I don't know, sir," interrupted David, carefully climbing out of the boat. "I have n't seen any of them for ever so long. I'm lost."

"You *don't* say so!" said the policeman. "Take my fin. Got to run or I'll catch cold.

Got my feet wet." And with that they started running up the beach away from the sea, but not very fast because David had to make his little legs go up and down—like the good-natured policeman's—more than they went forward and back, or he would have gone too fast and been pulled over backward. As the policeman dried, the blue stripes of his bathing-suit got wider, and the two pieces of it got longer, until presently he was dressed in his uniform just as David usually saw him, only much stouter, though where his cap and shoes came from David couldn't make out.

"Almost there now," panted the policeman. "Good exercise! Nothin' like it! Puts on your flesh! Keep tight hold of my fin!" And the policeman and David ran right off the edge of the goldfish bowl

and came down on the table
and ran right off the table
and came down on the rug
and ran right off the rug
and out of the door
and through the hallway
and up the stairs
and through the upper hallway
and into David's room
and jumped into
bed.

VII

How Fido Became a Fish and David a Flutist

"I WISH I had a flute, and could play tunes on it," said David to Fido—and, to his astonishment, he had a flute.

"I am tired of using my feet
Whenever I go on the street,"

barked Fido, talking doggerel as he always did in a dream.

"O, David, I wish
I could swim like a fish—"

and to David's astonishment Fido was a fish. He swam in the air. If David had not had him on the end of a cord he might have swum right up in the sky and disappeared entirely. You are often astonished like that in dreams, but you never stay astonished very long.

David fastened the cord to his belt, for it takes two hands to play a flute properly, and sat down on the garden wall to play. Fido, after swimming round the rosebush and smelling the roses, which he had never before been able to reach, floated just above the wall beside him, moving his fins gently.

"There 's nothing I like to hear more,"

said Fido, when David stopped to take a fresh breath,

"Than the sound of a flute, I am sure.
I hope you know that pretty tune,
'Ye Banks and Braes o' Bonnie Doon.'"

So David played "Ye Banks and Braes o' Bonnie Doon" twice, once forward and once backward, and Fido beat time with one fin, and looked very sad, as we all do when we are enjoying a musical performance.

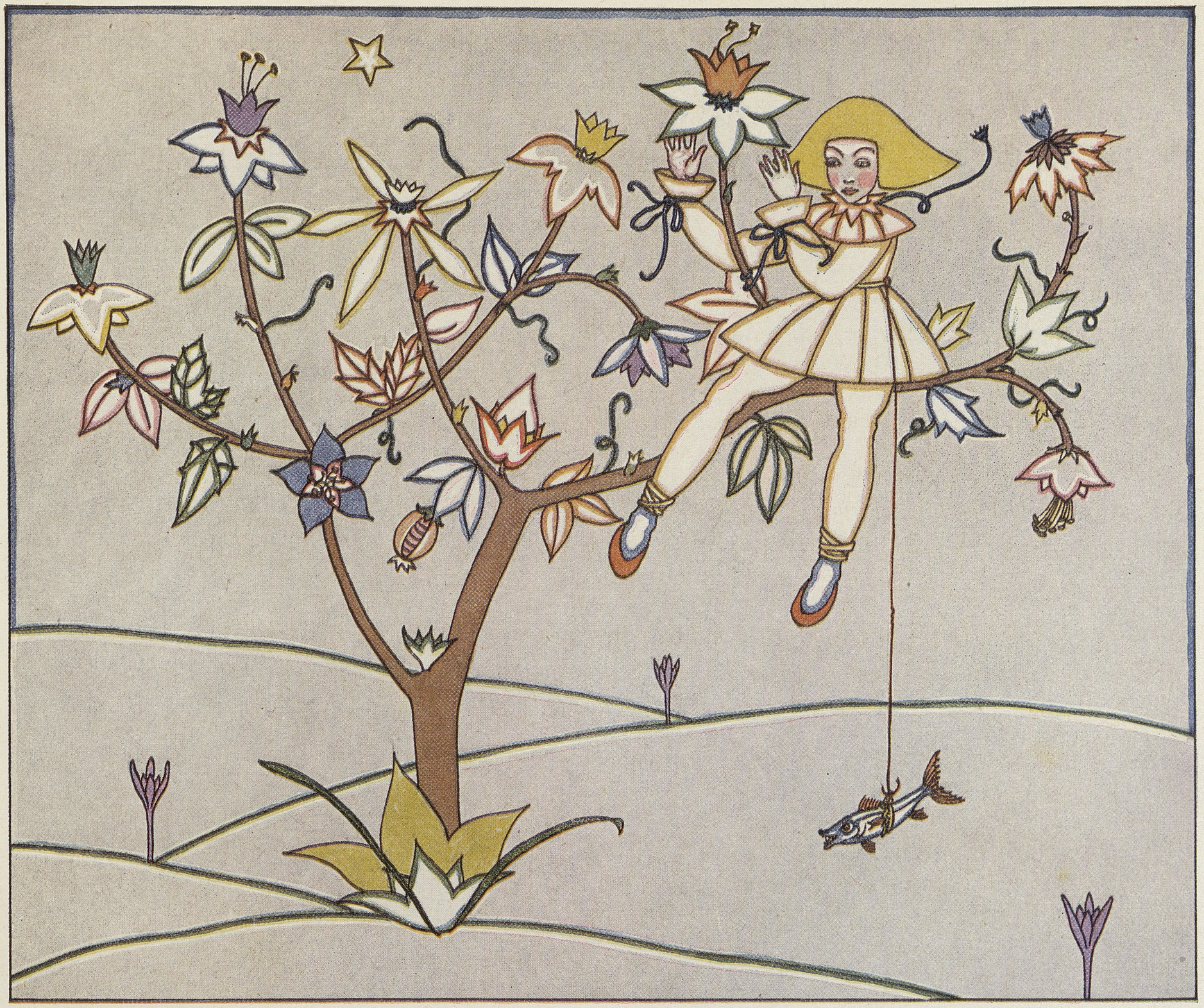
"Oh! music,"

said Fido,

"is glorious stuff.
I never can get half enough.
But this is a regular orgy.
Now let 's have 'Marching through Georgy.'"

So David began playing "Marching through Georgia," and it was so lively that, when he got to the "Hurrah, hurrah!" part of it, he jumped down off the wall, and he and Fido began to march. It was rather difficult for Fido, but he managed it by swimming in a jerky kind of way and moving his fins in time to the flute.

In this manner David and Fido marched down the street, and before they had gone very far David saw that there were two fine stout policeman marching in front of them, and people and wagons and motor cars all along the side of the road just the way they are when there is a procession coming. There were people at the windows, and on the piazzas and roofs and fences and telegraph poles, and wherever they could get to see David and Fido marching through Georgia. Flags were flying, and when they came to the City Hall there was a large stand with seats like those at the circus, and rows of people cheering and waving their hats and handkerchiefs. In the very front sat the Governor of the State,



He was sitting in the tree playing the flute, with Fido hanging underneath

wearing a tall hat. David knew him by sight because his father had once taken him to see a procession, and had pointed out the Governor looking at it from just such a stand. And when David and Fido marched past, the Governor stood up and took off his tall hat to them just as if he knew them.

Now when he saw the Governor of the State bowing to him like that David knew that he ought to bow back, and say "How do you do?" to the Governor. So he stopped playing his flute. But before he could so much as say "How," the Governor of the State vanished, with his tall hat in his hand, and so did everybody and everything else. David and Fido were alone in a large field with a many-colored tree in the middle of it—and the next thing he knew he was sitting in the tree playing the flute, with Fido hanging underneath at the end of the cord.

As far as David could see in every direction there was nothing but fields and fields, not even a cow or a sheep. It made him feel lonely, and he began to play "Home, Sweet Home" on his flute.

"Oh, please *don't* begin to play that,"

barked Fido.

"It makes me feel dreadfully flat.
I want to go back,
But I can't see the track."

"So do I," said David, speaking between the notes of his music. "There isn't a road in sight. Nothing but fields and fields *and* fields. I want to go home, and I can't do

anything but sit in this old tree and play this old flute. I can't get down and I can't stop, and I can't play anything but 'Home, Sweet Home.' Oh dear! Oh dear!" And in spite of himself he played "Home, Sweet Home" forward, and then began playing it backward.

"It gets worse and worse,"

howled Fido,

"When it 's played hind-side first.
Oh, David, I wish
That I was n't a fish,—"

and then, to David's astonishment, Fido was a dog again. He weighed so much more when he was a dog than when he was a fish that the cord broke, and Fido turned a somersault in the air and landed on his head under the many-colored tree. But he was on his feet in a jiffy, and running across the field as fast as his legs could carry him. In a few minutes he was quite out of sight.

"Oh dear! Oh dear!" thought David, still beautifully performing "Home, Sweet Home," "I wish I'd never had this old flute."

And then, suddenly, it was as if he had never had the old flute. For he had been playing the part where the flute says, "Be it ever so humble," and he disappeared from the tree so quickly that all the flute had time to say was, "Be it ever so hum—"

VIII

How Cook Treated David to an Ice Cream Soda and was Almost Eaten Up by a Cow

DAVID was sitting on the stone wall, staring steadily with both eyes at the kitchen door, for he had a feeling that something unusual was going to happen. And so it did.

The door opened suddenly, and Cook bounded out. She came out with both feet together. When her two feet touched the gravel walk at the bottom of the steps, she made a spring upward, turned a somersault, came down on both feet, sprang upward as before, turned a somersault, and so on until she had turned six somersaults and landed near where David was sitting.

"Come on," said Cook, with a happy laugh, and she caught David by the hand and began somersaulting along the street. David found himself somersaulting along with her. When Cook went up, David went up. When Cook turned over, David turned over. When Cook came down on her feet, David came down on his feet. It was a delightfully new way to get about, but after a time they stopped turning somersaults and ran hand in hand as fast as they could.

"Where are we going?" panted David.

"We're going to the drug store, the drug store, the drug store," replied Cook in a merry sing-song voice. "We're going to the drug store to get an ice-cream soda."

Nothing could have suited David better. Hand in hand they bounded along the street, jumping over anybody or anything that got in the way, people, wagons, automobiles, the

postman and the policeman and a little boy on a velocipede; and at last they bounded into the drug store and landed sitting each on a high stool in front of the soda fountain.

A tall, thin young man, wearing a white coat, and with yellow hair that grew straight up on his head like grass, was polishing a soda-water glass with a large towel. When he saw how warm they were, he handed the towel to Cook, who mopped her face with it, and then mopped David's.

"*Fizz — fizz — fizz —*"

said the soda-fountain clerk, placing his right hand over his heart and making two polite bows, a large one to Cook and a small one to David,

"*Fizz — fizz — fizz —*
From morning until night.
To fill for all
The glasses tall
Is my delight.
Lemon, chocolate, vanilla,
Strawberry or sarsaparilla,
Any fruit or any flavor
That the customer may favor.

"*Fizz — fizz — fizz —*

"Oh, you may be sure
Every flavor 's pure,
Because, you see, our way it is
To make them on the premises.

"Fizz — fizz — fizz —"

"A strawberry ice-cream soda for me, good youth," said Cook, "and don't be stingy with the ice cream. Do as your generous heart bids you and put in a plenty of it. Add one heaping tablespoonful of grated walnuts, sprinkle well with cinnamon, and garnish with a rich, ripe, red, preserved cherry on top. And the same for the child."

So the soda-fountain clerk poured a thick red strawberry sirup out of a handsome bottle into two clean glasses, and squirted some milk from a silver faucet into the thick red strawberry sirup, and squirted some soda water from another silver faucet into the milk-and-strawberry sirup. And then he mixed it all up by throwing the contents of one glass into the other, back and forth, back and forth, so skillfully that what had been in one glass got out just in time to let what had been in the other glass get in, and not a drop fell on the counter—and it was fascinating to watch. And then he took a silver dipper and dipped ice cream out of a box, and dipped so generously that some of it did fall on the counter, and the drug-store kitten came running and purring along the neighboring show case to lap it up.

"And the same for the little cat," said Cook.

The soda-fountain clerk made another ice-cream soda. He fizzed them with foam. He added heaping tablespoonfuls of grated walnuts. He sprinkled well with cinnamon. He felt in the pocket of his white coat and found three rich, ripe, red preserved cherries. He put a cherry on top of each ice-cream soda, stuck a long-handled spoon and a long yellow straw in each glass, and set them before his customers. It surprised David to see the kitten using spoon and straw just the way Cook and he did, although of course Kitten had to use both paws at once to handle them. Even so it got ice-cream soda all over its little black face.

David finished his ice-cream soda first, and began blowing through his straw to amuse himself. First there was a little bubble at the end of the straw, and then a bigger one, and then such a very big one indeed that David looked right through it and saw the soda-fountain clerk all out of shape so that he looked very short and fat instead of tall and thin, and made David laugh aloud.

And that burst the bubble, and David found himself somewhere else, sitting on a mushroom, and blowing bubbles through his ice-cream-soda straw.

"I wish you hadn't done that," said Cook. "You've got us in a pretty fix, you have."

David looked all about. It was Cook's voice, but there was nobody in sight, and nothing near him but a large pink flower growing beside the mushroom.

"Oh, I'm here all right," said Cook, "and not all right either. I've been handling flour all my life, and now I've turned into one. Oh dear! Oh dear!"

"I don't see you," said David.

"Yes you do, too," said Cook. "I don't know what they'd call me in a seed catalogue, but I'm this handsome pink thing right in front of you."

David looked hard at the pink flower, but it was difficult to believe that it could really be Cook. There was not the slightest resemblance.

"Being a flower isn't so bad after you get used to staying in one place," said Cook, after a while. "I feel real poetic. Listen to this:—

"Modest flow'ret in the grass,
None observe me as they pass.

"Oh, I'm here all right," said Cook, "and not all right either"

I don't care at all, you know.
It 's enough for me to grow.

"Modest flow'ret, sweet and shy,
Growing, growing toward the sky.
Who would guess to look at me
That a cook I used to be?

"Pretty good, isn't it?

"Modest flow'ret, sweet and shy,
Growing, growing toward the sky, —

"O David! David! Help! Help! Help! *Help!* There's a cow coming. She'll eat me! She'll eat me! I can't stir a root. Help! *Help!*"

And there was a cow, looking down at them, and chewing her cud, and anybody could see she had an eye on Cook.

"Blow a bubble at her! Blow a bubble at her!" screamed Cook.

David aimed his ice-cream-soda straw at the cow, and blew a bubble with all his might. It struck the cow right between her eyes, and burst with a loud pop. The cow looked at David reproachfully, and vanished. And the next thing he knew, David and Cook were themselves again, hand in hand, bounding and somersaulting home from the drug store.

Over, turn over,
Oh, David and Cook!
People may stare at
You. People may look.

Little you care how
Surprising you seem,
David and Cook, it
Is only a dream.

You are safe now,
Cook, from the cow,
Cow in the clover,
So over, turn over.
Soft blows the breeze
Through apple trees.

Over, turn over.
How jolly it feels!
Home again! Home again!
Head over heels.

IX

How Jim the Rabbit Sailed a Boat and David Met Father and Mother When They Were Children

DAVID sat in the swing under the old apple tree, and wondered what to do next. A light breeze blew through the tree, and made little snowstorms of apple blossoms. Fido slept soundly in front of his house beside the barn door, and Jim the Rabbit, who was Fido's near neighbor, bobbed about behind his high wire fence. A rooster and two hens hunted bugs in the grass near the swing. It was all quite dull, but pretty soon one of the hens spoke to the other.

"There he goes again!" said the hen excitedly. "There he goes again! *Cluck-cluck-cluckety!* All dressed up, too! Oh, *cluck!*"

"Such a rabbit!" exclaimed the other hen. "*Cluck-cluck-cluck-cluck-cluck!*" And they both stopped hunting bugs, and stared toward the rabbit yard.

"What he needs is a stepladder," said the rooster, laughing. "A stepladder. Ha-ha! *Cock-a-doodle-doo!* Ha-ha!"

Jim the Rabbit was climbing over his wire fence. He made hard work of it scrambling to the top, and easy work of it getting to the bottom, for he just tumbled off backward. He landed so hard that David was afraid he had hurt himself; but he got up briskly, shook the dust off his red pantaloons, and came up the path toward the swing, walking like a little, short-legged man with his hands in his pockets. David lifted him by the ears to look at him, but instead of coming up all at once, as a rabbit usually does, Jim's hind feet stayed on the

ground, and he stretched and stretched and stretched so that, when David let go of his ears, Jim was almost as tall as David himself. He was the biggest rabbit David had ever seen yet.

"Have a sucker?" said Jim. He felt in his pocket and found two lollipops, which, as everybody knows, are a kind of candy on the end of a stick so that you can hold the stick and enjoy the candy without getting it on your fingers.

"I don't think I like it," said David, tasting his lollipop.

"You can't help liking it," said Jim. "It's chickweed. Put it all in your mouth at once." And to show how it was done, Jim put his own lollipop in his mouth till nothing but the stick could be seen of it.

David put his lollipop in his mouth all at once, and the next thing he knew he had swallowed his lollipop, stick and all, and was sitting in a boat with Jim sailing it. When he looked around he saw everywhere other boats, each with a Jim and a David in it, all sailing the same way across a sea where trees grew up out of the water, and the sky overhead was so full of moons and stars that it was as bright as day, only not at all sunny. And when he looked over the side of the boat, he saw two fishes, who waved their fins cheerfully, and shouted, "Hello, David."

Jim began singing.

"Now list to me, my jolly, jolly lad,"

sang Jim the Rabbit,

"Yo-ho! Yo-ho! and a bottle of milk!
I 'll sing you a song that 's salt and sad.
Yo-ho! Yo-ho!

Three wise old men of Gotham town,
They put to sea in a bowl of brown,
But it could n't float, so it went down.
Oh-h-h-h-h-h-h-h-h-h, the bowl went down
down
down
down
down
To the bottom of the sea.
Yo-ho! Yo-ho! and a bottle of milk!
And so did the wise men, one, two, three.
And that is as sad as sad can be.
Yo-ho!"

All the other Jims in all the other boats were singing the same song at the same time, and it *was* so very, very, very sad that it made all the Davids weep bitterly to hear it. David wept and wept, and pretty soon he felt his feet getting wet, and saw that the bottom of the boat was full of his tears.

"If you don't stop that crying," said Jim severely, "we'll sink, that's what! Don't be such a baby! Stop it! Have a sucker?"

He felt in his pocket and found a lollipop.

"I—I don't think I like it," said David, still weeping but tasting the lollipop.

"You can't help liking it," said Jim. "It's cabbage. Put it all in your mouth at once, or we'll sink."

So David put the lollipop all in his mouth at once, and only just in time, for the boat was now quite full of tears and sinking rapidly. And the next thing he knew he had swallowed the lollipop, stick and all, and was standing on dry land, with Fido beside him, looking at a fine house with a curly roof, and flowers at the windows, and a road with flowers on both sides leading to the front door, and trees growing in big flowerpots with the picture of a leaping stag on them. And Fido was shaking himself the way he did when he had been in swimming.

"That rabbit means perfectly right,"

explained Fido,

"But his mind is so silly and light
That, to whisper the truth,
As companion for youth
I would n't trust him out of sight."

David looked toward the curly-roofed house, and then he raised both hands in happy surprise. There was his own Father, only he was no bigger than David, reading a book near the front door; and there was his own Mother, only she was no bigger than David, running about with a bird perched on her finger. Father had on a neat white suit with a blue collar and red shoes, and Mother was dressed in a very short green frock with very long red stockings, which was a queer costume for your Mother but very becoming. And there was another dog like Fido, only he had much more tail.

David ran joyfully along the path.

There was his own Father reading a book; and his own Mother with a bird perched on her finger

"Hello, Pop," said David.

"Hello, Dave," said Father.

"What you reading?" asked David.

"Mother Goose," replied Father. "It's great."

"I've got that book, too," said David.

"That your dog?" asked Father.

"Yes," said David. "He's an awful smart dog."

"I've got a dog, too," said Father. "What's your dog's name?"

"Fido," said David.

It was the beginning of a sensible, interesting conversation, but just then Mother came running up, the way girls do, and had to spoil it.

"I've got a bird," said Mother in a sing-song way, dancing up and down, on her long little red legs. "I've got a bird. I've got a bird. I'd rather have a pretty bird than an old dog. I'd rather have a pretty bird than an old dog."

"Birds are all right for girls," said Father, "but give *me* a dog."

"If I didn't know more than a bird,"

said Fido, who had been getting acquainted with Father's dog,

"I'd be sorry I ever occurred."

"I don't like dogs that talk," said Mother. "Let's play tag." And she ran and tagged David, who tagged Father, who tagged Fido, who tagged Father's dog, who tagged David, who tagged Mother. Never, it seemed to David, had he played such a game of tag before,

and never had he played with such lively children. And then, suddenly, there was Cook looking at them, and nothing unusual about her except that she had on Father's tall hat.

"Bedtime," said Cook.

"I don't want to go to bed," said Father.

"I think we might stay up one little tweeny-weeny minute longer," said Mother.

"Not another minute," said Cook firmly to Mother and Father, and "Run home now, little boy," to David; and she grasped Father and Mother each by one hand and led them into the house. They hung back hard, and they scuffed their little heels in the gravel, but it did no good. Cook was too strong for them. In they went, and then, after a while, David saw a light in an upstairs room, and knew that Mother and Father were being put to bed.

Mother and Father
Must have their bread
And milk and bath
And be put to bed.

Mother and Father
Have gone upstairs,
Put on their nighties
And said their prayers.

Mother and Father
Are tucked up tight,
And Cook has kissed
Them each good-night.

Then the light went out and David was in the dark.

X

How David Joined Santa Claus's Circus and Became the King of Lion Tamers

THERE are two ways of getting downstairs. One is to walk down, step, step, steppety-step—and that is how you go when people are around. The other way is to slide down the banisters, *Wsh-h-h-h-h-h-h-h*, which is quicker and a lot more exciting—and that is how you go when there is nobody around.

David and Fido were in the upper hallway of David's house, where the long flight of stairs goes straight down to the front door; and when Fido looked up at David and spoke real language, David knew something out of the ordinary was coming, though he couldn't guess what.

"I 'm going to slide down the stairs,"
barked Fido.

"There 's nobody looking who cares.
I never have tried,
But I think I can slide—"

And he made a jump, landed sitting on the banisters, and slid down so straight and fast that he shot off at the bottom, struck the front door, and went through it. David followed. He sat on the banisters just as Fido had done, and slid down, and shot off at the bottom, and struck the front door, and went through, and came down beside Fido in a large field. There was a big tent in the field, with flags flying and a crowd of people going in

at an entrance, just as they did when David's father had taken him to a circus; but where David and Fido had landed there was nobody near except a stout little old gentleman sitting on a rock. He had cheeks like red apples, eyes like blue marbles, and whiskers like white cotton, and David felt sure he had seen him before, but he couldn't think where.

He was dressed in a black swallowtail coat, a white shirt, yellow trousers, and shiny top-boots, just like the gentleman David had seen in the circus making the clown behave himself, and the horse run that the lady stood on and jumped through hoops of paper; and, like that gentleman, he had a long whip which he cracked loudly every now and then. But he looked gloomy and discouraged.

"Good-morrow, boy and dog," said the stout old gentleman. "You haven't either of you seen my King of Lion Tamers lying round anywhere, have you?"

The question puzzled David, and, as he could think of nothing to say, he said nothing. Fido snuffed the old gentleman. He snuffed and snuffed, wagging his tail to show that he didn't mean to bite him.

"I thought I knew that honest face,"
said Fido,
"Although at first I couldn't place
It quite. But now I 'd bet my paws
That this old chap is Santa Claus."

"Your surmise, Fido," said the old gentleman, "is quite right. I *am* Santa Claus, and this is my circus—'Santa Claus's Greatest Show on Earth and Million Dollar Menagerie of

Wild Toy Animals — An Entertainment and an Education.' Oh, it's annoying, it's *most* annoying," continued Santa Claus, cracking his whip. "Here's the show just about to begin, and I've mislaid my King of Lion Tamers. This morning I had given him a fresh coat of paint, and had put him somewhere to dry, and now I can't find him. The Public will be indignant, very indignant, and you can't blame it. What's a circus without a King of Lion Tamers, now I ask you?"

"Not much,"

agreed Fido.

"It 's a pretty poor circus.
To pay an admission would irk us.
But why not ask *him*,"

added Fido, pointing his paw at David,

"to exhibit the beast?
That would be better than nothing, at least."

"Would you?" asked Santa Claus hopefully. "It's a wooden lion, and not at all dangerous. Not a bit. Come on, there's a good fellow." And he jumped up, and seized David by the hand, and in another minute they were inside that part of the tent where everything you see comes from through a great red velvet curtain. When the wind swayed the curtain David could see the rings of the circus, and people sitting in rows and rows and rows waiting for the show to start.

Behind the curtain everybody was almost ready for the procession that begins a circus.

The band stood near the curtain, and David wondered how they were going to play; for the bandsmen were all cut out of cardboard, and when you looked at them sidewise you could hardly see them at all. A cloth elephant almost stepped on him as he followed Santa Claus, and a tall wooden giraffe bent its neck and wanted its nose rubbed, but David had no time to stop for that.

"Hello, David," called a beautiful doll lady sitting on a high rocking-horse, but Santa Claus hurried him on without stopping to speak to her. There were stuffed camels, and more doll ladies and doll gentlemen on rocking-horses, and doll clowns, and a company of tin soldiers, and a tribe of paper Indians practising a war dance, and a gilded pasteboard cage drawn by four tin horses on rollers. A wooden man with long wooden whiskers and wearing a long wooden gown was walking stiffly up and down by the pasteboard cage.

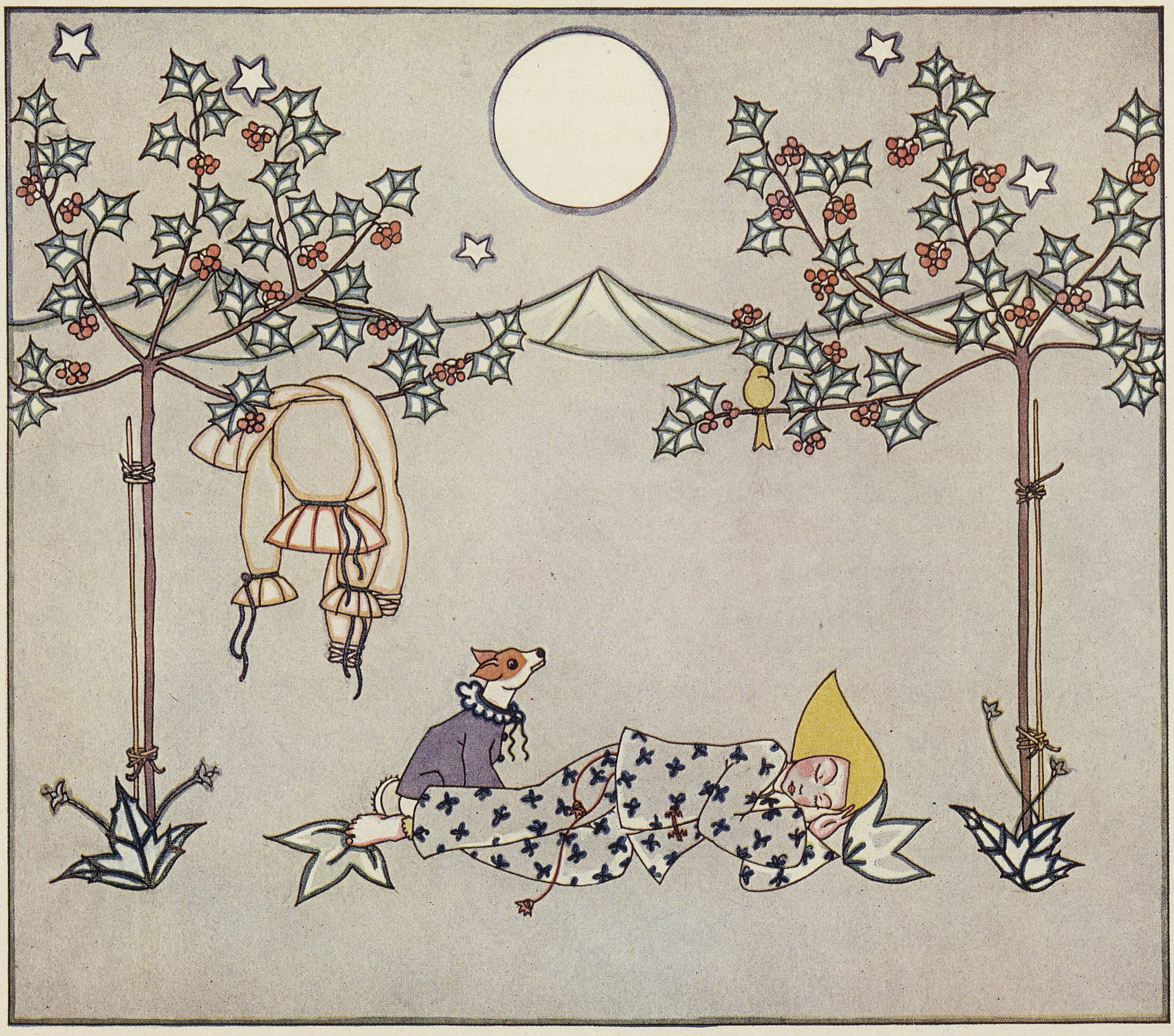
"That's Noah," said Santa Claus. "He and his sons take care of the menagerie for me. He's terribly upset because we've lost the King of Lion Tamers."

"He hasn't come back," said Noah. "The Public will be *so* indignant. I've got Shem, Ham, and Japheth looking everywhere for him."

"It's all right, old fellow," said Santa Claus. "I've got somebody else. Can't stop to paint him. Open the door. Quick." And as Noah opened a little door at the back of the cage, Santa Claus fairly pushed David into it.

They were not a second too soon. The band struck up. The procession began to roll. Almost before he knew it, David found himself on the other side of the curtain, and there was the Public, sitting row above row and clapping its hands; and there was the lion,

The grass was as soft and comfortable as any bed you ever slept in



rolling back and forth in the cage, and lashing his tail stiffly, and uttering loud roars as if he were a very angry lion indeed. And after they had marched all around the tent, the tin horse drew the cage into one of the rings.

Santa Claus stood in the ring and cracked his whip.

"We have here, ladies and gentlemen," he said in a loud voice, "David, the King of Lion Tamers." And then in a whisper he said to David, "Go on. Do something. Tame him. Make him stand on his head."

David folded his arms and looked at the lion, just as he had seen the gentleman who tames lions do in the circus when he went with his father.

"Please stand on your head," said David.

"Stand on your head yourself," said the lion. "I'm sick of it."

"He won't stand on his head," said David to Santa Claus through the bars of the cage.

"Well, if he won't he won't," said Santa Claus. "Try something else. Make him jump through a hoop."

"No use," said the lion. "You can't spring any of these amateur kings on *me*, Santa Claus. I want my own dear old King of Lion Tamers, and I won't make a fool of myself or anybody else."

"But the Public!" said Santa Claus. "Think of the Public. The Public will be very indignant."

"I don't care a wag of my tail for the Public," said the lion. "I want my own dear old King of Lion Tamers."

"Here he is! Here he is!" shouted Noah, running from behind the curtain. "Shem found him. He'd fallen into the paint barrel."

David looked anxiously through the bars of the cage, and saw the King of Lion Tamers close on the heels of Noah. He was a tall wooden man, but it would have been hard to say just what he looked like; for, although he had tried to wash his face, he was all covered with blue paint, which fell off in drops as he ran stiffly across the sawdust. In one hand he carried a large hoop, covered with white paper, which he was holding over his head to keep from getting paint on it, and the wind was blowing the hoop so that it seemed to be trying to get away from him. And then it did get away from him, and the next thing David knew, he and Fido were alone in a field, and the hoop had become a great white moon shining down on them. And he could see the circus tents in the distance, and hear the band playing.

"That was a wonderful show,"

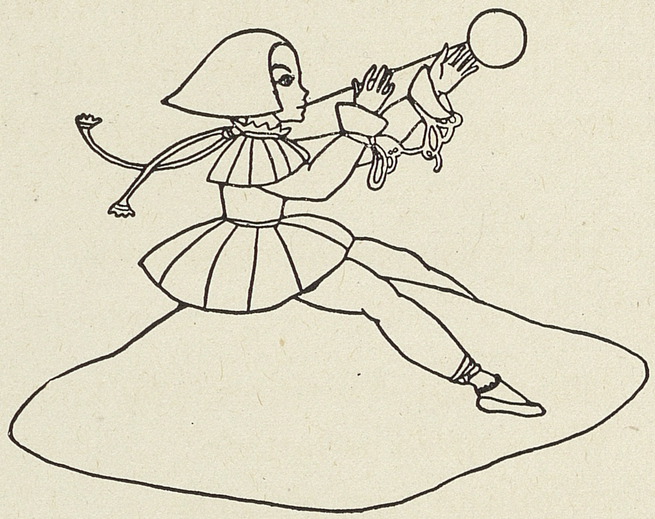
said Fido.

"But now it is bedtime, you know.
We 're tired as farmers,
So put on your pyjamas —"

David looked about, and there were his pyjamas. They hung on the bough of a cherry tree, and he felt so sleepy he was glad to see them, and glad to put them on and hang his own clothes in the same place. The grass was as soft and comfortable as any bed you ever slept in.

And as David went to sleep he heard Fido saying:—

"When the stars come out and peep,
Boys and pups should go to sleep.
When the moon is shining bright,
Then 's the time to say Good Night!
Good Night! Good Night!"



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